

DOE News Release

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Record amounts of transuranic waste leaving Idaho

In the year since it purchased the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project facilities, the U.S. Department of Energy has safely shipped record amounts of transuranic waste out of Idaho at a faster rate than it has ever shipped transuranic waste before. Over this time frame, the Department has been able to sustain a shipping rate that puts the Department on schedule for meeting commitments made to the state of Idaho for shipping transuranic (TRU) waste out of the state.

“It’s an accomplishment that we are proud of, one that clearly speaks to the Department’s efforts to clean up the Idaho National Laboratory site and move waste in a safe and compliant manner,” said James Rispoli, assistant secretary for Environmental Management for the Department of Energy. “AMWTP is the cornerstone of DOE’s commitment to safely retrieve, characterize and ship transuranic waste out of Idaho and prepare the Idaho National Laboratory site for future missions,” Rispoli said.

“More than 9,000 cubic meters of transuranic waste have safely left Idaho in the past four years, with nearly 5,400 cubic meters of that sent in the last 10 months,” said Elizabeth Sellers, manager of the Department of Energy’s Idaho Operations Office. “This rate is more than enough to meet DOE’s commitment to the state of Idaho to ship an average of 2,000 cubic meters of transuranic waste out of the state each year,” Sellers said.

“Shipping this much waste required the combined support of federal and contractor employees in Idaho, subcontractors, and employees at the Waste Isolation Processing Plant in New Mexico, where the waste was received. The core of operations is the personal dedication and commitment of the employees who have stepped up and shown that they can safely retrieve, treat and ship waste,” said Sellers.

Frank Russo, president and general manager for Bechtel BWXT Idaho, the contractor hired by the Department of Energy to run the project, said, “Along with our dedicated employees, the state of Idaho played an important role as well, as Idaho state patrolmen inspect every shipment leaving the state, more than 500 to date. ISP voluntarily increased the days it made inspections and worked with us on short-notice situations, such as those caused by weather or mechanical issues. It has proven to be an all-around exceptional professional effort where we have all hit our stride to safely and efficiently ship transuranic waste.”

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